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AUTHOR Rosica, Thomas C.
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ABSTRACT

The papers presented at this conference review current research on effective educational practices for low-achieving students and identify those that might be applied to programs funded under Chapter 1 of the Education Consolidation and Improvement Act of 1981. A function assumed by several conference participants was to act as reactor to papers written for a particular session. This report reviews and discusses three papers prepared for the session on program and staffing structures and dealing respectively with summer programs, instructional setting, and student-to-instructor ratio. The paper maintains that, once program auditing was instituted by the federal government, the instructional settings began to be chosen by local education agencies (LEAs) for Chapter 1 programs mainly to escape "audit exceptions" and that they tended to stick with the pullout programs (as opposed to supportive service projects) because they were "safe and clear." Later changes necessitated that children remain in class, and once again the delivery system was altered in response to public outcries for change,rather than on the basis of sound pedagogical theory. As a result, these changes generated no significant gains in achievement. Teacher training, improved data collection, and careful, controlled, research/evaluation of the various alternative approaches to providing Chapter 1 services should be undertaken. Therefore it is proposed that school districts be permitted to apply for a waiver from Federal and state requirements to conduct experimental programs in Chapter 1. A review procedure should be established in the Department of Education to assure that the model developed is "audit exception free." LEAs should be allowed to develop innovative approaches to solving problems. Programs of this type should be given a three-year experimental status, have a tight evaluation design, a clear audit trail, and be reviewed at the end of each year for continuation approval. When school districts are given the opportunity to develop creative program designs, more effective Chapter 1 programs should result. A list of references is included. (PS)

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PROGRAM AND STAFFING STRUCTURES: REACTIONS

by

Thomas C. Rosica
School District of Philadelphia
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

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PROGRAM AND STAFFING STRUCTURES: REACTIONS

Barbara Heyns: Summer Programs and Compensatory Education

In reviewing Dr. Heyns' report, my personal experience coincides with her findings. Although we have in-depth evaluation reports on all Federal projects, the reports on summer programs do not provide the statistical or achievement information found in other reports. However, with the explosion of projects this summer, evaluation designs are tighter and data collection will be more precise.

I wonder whether or not summer programs should be structured as "new endeavors" or whether they should in fact be part of an extended year curriculum.

Summer programs, in the years to come, will see a change of focus. The implementation of promotion policies and the more rigid graduation requirements will force many school districts into rethinking what should be the curriculum for summer. The relative ineffectiveness of summer remediation must force school districts to take a hard look at content of reading and math programs. I agree with Dr. Heyns when she states: "it is not clear whether effectiveness should be measured as 'gains' or as 'arrested declines'" (p. III-27).

Summer programs are not confined to services for children. There are frequently summer programs that focus on staff development. Information on the effectiveness of these programs is practically nonexistent. Isn't this an area that also needs careful review?

The effective schools movement and development of school improvement programs have also used the summer for planning activities. Do these activities impact on improved instruction and better school organization?

Dr. Heyns has me asking a lot of questions to which there are no answers. These areas will need further investigation.

If we're ever going to get a handle on what's happening during the summer, data collection methods must be refined, a standard format developed, and common definitions written to assist in the uniform collection of data.

Some of the items I would like to see included in a standard form are:

- Is the program designed as remedial, recreational or both?

- Is the purpose of the program maintenance or improvement of achievement?

- How many minutes per day, days per week, and how many weeks will the program operate? How much time per day will be devoted to remedial instruction, enrichment, and recreation?

- What are the objectives of the program? Do they spell out specific achievement goals? Have these goals been accomplished?

- Attendance--What is the pool of eligibles; how many have been enrolled; how many completed the program?

- How many children successfully met the programs' objectives? Was an objective measurement technique (a standardized test) used?

- Was a homogeneous or heterogeneous grouping technique used?

- Are more nonpublic school children being offered summer programs to meet the "equitable services" provision in the law? Are these programs as successful as public school programs? Are nonpublic school teachers hired to work in the program?

As you can see, I have more questions than answers. The only way we will ever be able to determine the effectiveness of summer programs is to amend the law to require uniform data collection. Perhaps a way to finance this effort would be through an earmarking of state administrative funds for this purpose.

Francis Archambault:
Instructional Setting: Key Issue or Bogus Concern

Dr. Archambault has provided an excellent review of the literature in Instructional Setting. His analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of pullout and in-class instruction are clearly stated.

In reviewing the paper, I find myself in general agreement with his conclusions.

- On the change from pullout to in-class programs, it is my assumption that changes in local conditions rather than changes in the law and regulations, have stimulated the use of in-class models.

- On the reason for choice of pullout models, I agree that this is more a matter of compliance, rather than for pedagogical reasons.

- I agree wholeheartedly with the statement "the type of instruction delivered within a particular setting is more important than the setting itself" (p. III-68). A truism if there ever was one.

- I agree with Glass and Smith (1977) on the negative impact of pullout programs.

- Carter's (1984) analysis of the effect of classroom practices, particularly the instructional leadership of the principal, reinforces my perception of the elements necessary for solid programming.

- I disagree with Yap (1985) on cost effectiveness and agree with Dieneman, Flynn, and Al-Salam (1974) and Fitzgerald and Hunt (1985) on their conclusions.

- I disagree with Glass and Smith (1979) "that reducing class size to 15 and delivering instruction within the regular classroom would not only redress some of the problems occurring within pullout programs, but also improve student performance."

- Kennedy's (1978) advice on labeling and stigma, is excellent.

- I also agree with Kennedy's suggestions on coordination between regular and compensatory education instruction, "the quality of joint planning that occurs, the amount of decision-making power given to teachers...and the flexibility in scheduling are key elements in successful planning."

- In 1984, a program incorporating most of the elements mentioned above, was implemented in Philadelphia. Evaluation results of the 1984-85 program rank it as one of the school district's most successful Chapter 1 programs.

- I support the research finding regarding two teachers per classroom. Experience in Philadelphia over the past two years, strongly supports these conclusions.

- Our research in Philadelphia strongly supports Eyler's (1982) recommendation "that compensatory services be delivered in-class by specialists."

- I concur with Scheutz' (1980) findings on teacher aides. Our evaluation findings in Philadelphia support her premise regarding lack of effectiveness.

- Nonregulatory Guidance issued June, 1983, discusses the statutory and regulatory requirements, and refers to Section 558 (b) and (d) of Chapter 1 and Section 200.62 of the regulations as the provisions currently in effect that govern compliance in this area.

In my personal review of Title I and Chapter 1 over the past 20 years, I have witnessed an evolutionary change in focus.

During the early years of Title I there were enormous purchases of books, equipment, furniture, and instructional materials. This was followed by a period of trying to find the best approach to meeting the needs of educationally deprived children. They were big on cultural enrichment and field trips, guidance services, nutrition, and providing medical and dental services. There were also innovative instructional approaches developed during this period.

Then something interesting happened. The U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare started to audit the programs. Local education agency (LEA) Title I coordinators, who had not paid much attention to the law and regulations, were suddenly confronted with audit exceptions. Since the state education agency (SEA) is the conduit for this funding, it found itself liable for large sums of money.

In order to protect themselves, SEAs decided that they would approve only "safe" projects. Slowly but surely, supportive service projects were eliminated and pullout programs in reading and math became the standards. The pullout programs were "safe and clear." Pedagogically, they may not have made sense, but they were safe from audit exceptions. Gaffney and Schember (1982) are correct when they state: "uncertainty or misconceptions about the meaning of certain requirements and the fear of possible audit violations led some states to promulgate overly restrictive policies concerning the types of program Title I may fund." Thus, pullout programs became the standard.

When passed in 1981, Chapter 1 of P.L. 97-35, was designed to provide greater flexibility in the design and implementation of projects. However, the fear of audit exceptions continues to drive program decisions.

Federal and state rulemaking was curtailed by Chapter 3 of ECIA. In this instance, the U.S. Department of Education circumvented the law by developing Nonregulatory Guidance. Although not binding on the SEA or LEA, it is considered a source document in matters of compliance.

Once again, the principal theme of the scenario is "avoid audit exceptions." As a result, although the law was liberalized, LEAs did not change their basic program structure.

Soon after the passage of ECIA, and not related to the restructuring of Title I, there was an outcry to reduce or eliminate pullout programs. Principals and teachers were growing increasingly concerned about the negative effects of pullout programs. Pressure was being placed on LEA Chapter 1 coordinators to develop in-class designs. They responded and submitted the projects to the state for approval. Although the SEA Chapter 1 coordinators initially resisted, they eventually had to capitulate.

Another trend emerged in 1984. A Nation at Risk became the stimulus for change in some school districts. The additional curriculum requirements and standardizing of the curriculum necessitated that children remain in class in order to participate in all areas of the curriculum. Aides and specialist teachers were placed in the classroom. Different scheduling techniques such as cycling were tried. Once again, the delivery system was altered in response to outcries for change that was not based on sound pedagogical theory but to accommodate the tenor of the times. As a result, we did not see significant gains in achievement. As the literature states, there is no conclusive evidence that in-class programs are superior to pullouts. In viewing the two principal models of Chapter 1 instruction. We are faced with the dilemma that neither delivers significant achievement gains.

In this conclusion, Dr. Archambault states:

> Based on what we know at this time, it is safe to conclude that setting is not directly responsible for student outcomes and that it is "the issue of effective practices, not setting, that deserves the attention of educators" (Leinhardt & Pallay, 1982, p. 557). This implies that they will have to consider, perhaps more seriously than in the past, what goes on within these settings and how regular and compensatory instruction can be woven together to improve student performance. (p. III-88)

He makes the point in the following paragraph that "effective school literature...would be a good starting point for this renewal emphasis on effective practice." I agree!

In order to accomplish this goal, I propose the following changes in the law governing Chapter 1 (P.L. 97-35):

That school districts be permitted to apply for a waiver from Federal and state requirements to conduct experimental programs in Chapter 1. To be eligible for this waiver, a school district will have to meet the following criteria:

> 35 percent or more of the children in the district must come from low-income families or 50 percent or more of the children in the district must score below the 50th percentile on a nationally standardized test.

Elements of the program will be:

1. The programs will be structured to provide the most effective education in accordance with current research and will include programs and projects to carry out research and demonstration activities.

2. All funding received under the waiver will be accounted for so that programs will be capable of audit in accordance with Federal standards.

3. All projects will be subject to procedures adapted for evaluating the effectiveness of the program in meeting the special educational needs of the targeted students, including the collection and analysis of data relating to the degree to which the programs have achieved their goals. Evaluation procedures will also include objective measurements of educational achievement in basic skills. The results of evaluations will be used in planning for and improving programs in periods subsequent to the evaluation period.

4. Staff development will be offered to all professional, support, and volunteer staff in target schools in order to make trained personnel available to special needs students.

5. Children currently served by Chapter 1 will continue to be served, but children currently ineligible can be included.

6. Funding may be used to reduce class size.

7. Requirements for school-wide projects will be retained except for the matching share.

8. Planning for programs will be developed in conjunction with and involve continuing consultation with teachers, administrators, and parents.

9. The programs developed under the waiver will include components designed to sustain student achievement beyond the academic year in which the program is conducted, including summer school.

10. The district will develop criteria permitting appropriate extension of programs conducted under the waiver which raise achievement of students or schools above eligibility cut-offs for a period of up to two years for the purpose of achieving permanent improvement.

11. Funding received by the school district under the waiver will be used to supplement, not supplant, funds from non-Federal sources for the education of targeted students.

12. The waiver period should extend for five years, with a performance review at the end of each year.

Harris Cooper:
Student-to-Instructor Ratios

Dr. Cooper's review of the literature is excellent. The summary provided at the end of the paper is faithful to the review in the body. I have, therefore, used the summary to provide two comments which I feel are pertinent in the discussion of his paper.

Summation

Attempting to identify the effects of reduced student-to-instructor ratios on student achievement required the examination of two hotly debated topics in educational research. Reviewers of the class size literature disagreed over whether a reduction in instructional group size has its intended effect and, if the effect in fact exists, how general it is over other variations in the learning environment. However, some consensus did emerge with regard to the circumstances most relevant to this discussion.

> Reduced class size appeared to be most efficacious with low-ability or disadvantaged students when reductions were in the range typically associated with Chapter 1 programs. Such reductions may not only lead to higher achievement but to better student and teacher attitudes and morale and to an enrichment of the core curriculum. (p. III-53)

Note that the reduction in class size necessary for producing any meaningful differences in achievement must be quite large. Reducing class size from 30 to 20 is <u>not</u> likely to do much for student achievement. The figure presented from Glass, Cahen, Smith, & Filby (1982) is extremely misleading because the ordinate (y-axis) stops at the 50th percentile instead of at the first percentile. This distorts the curve and makes the relationship appear to be much stronger than it is. For example, the difference between class sizes of five and ten, when there are more than 100 hours of instruction, is only seven percentile ranks (85-75). And, the effect for changes in class size is maximal at the lower end of the class size continuum.

> There was less controversy over the research on time and learning. Scholars in this area generally agreed that increases in allocated, instructional, and engaged time lead to increases in learning. However, because allocated time does not translate directly into more time-on-task, allocated time shows a lesser relation to achievement than more proximal time measures. Increases in time also showed diminishing returns, but the nature of the curvilinear relation between time and achievement is as yet unspecified. Disagreement existed among scholars over whether the size of the effect warrants increases in allocated time, as opposed to other types of interventions. Also, related research indicated that the greater amount of allocated time given to Chapter 1 students may not represent a net advantage. Instead, it may serve to lessen an advantage that more able students possess because they generally spend more time engaged in appropriate tasks. (p. III-53)

Note that student achievement is <u>very</u> dependent upon such teacher variables. This seems rather obvious, but it is a point often overlooked by school district administrators. If we accepted this notion, teacher training and careful, controlled, research/evaluation on the various alternative approaches to providing Chapter 1 services (or any other services) would be undertaken. The effect might be to have fewer, more expensive projects, but those projects would have a better chance of improving the achievement of Chapter 1 pupils. It is unfortunate that many school districts have failed to

determine the potential for a project's effectiveness before full scale implementation.

In his paper, Dr. Cooper makes a case for smaller class size and more time-on-task to approve the achievement of Chapter 1 students.

However, the ability to implement these changes presents a challenge to LEA staff working for Chapter 1.

Although the Congress passes laws and the U. S. Department of Education develops regulations, it is the states that hold the key to implementing new and innovative approaches in Chapter 1 programs. P. L. 97-35, in its Declaration of Policy, sets forth the philosophy and the sense of Congress on its aspirations for Chapter 1.

Declaration of Policy

> The Congress declares it to be the policy of the United States to continue to provide financial assistance to State and local educational agencies to meet the special needs of educationally deprived children, on the basis of entitlements calculated under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, but do so in a manner which will eliminate burdensome, unnecessary, and unproductive paperwork and free the schools of unnecessary Federal supervision, direction, and control. Further, the Congress recognizes the special educational needs of children of low-income families, and that concentrations of such children in local educational agencies adversely affect their ability to provide educational programs which will meet the needs of such children. The Congress also finds that Federal assistance for this purpose will be more effective if education officials, principals, teachers, and supporting personnel are freed from overly prescriptive regulations and administrative burdens which are not necessary for fiscal accountability and make no contribution to the instructional program.

However, this has been clouded by "the Secretary's interpretation" of the law, and the fear of SEA Chapter 1 coordinators of audit exceptions.

The greatest fear of LEA Coordinators, however, is a visit by the Inspector General's office. Time and again programs

reviewed, approved, and monitored by SEA personnel are found to be illegal by the Inspector General's staff. A review of cases before the Education Appeals Board shows that LEAs who have implemented programs they thought were legal, and the SEA thought were legal, have been found illegal by the Inspector General's staff.

What is even more ironic is that the Inspector General in Washington has not developed a uniform standard for program review. Although audit guidelines have been established, we have "bookkeepers" making decisions on the validity of program offerings. Let me cite two examples:

1. Bennett v. Kentucky--This case involved first- and second-grade readiness classes in 50 Kentucky LEAs. This was a reduced class size model that was approved by the SEA, monitored by the U. S. Department of Education, and found to be noncompliant by the Inspector General. The area of noncompliance was supplantation. This case went to the Education Appeals Board, through the Federal Court System, and finally landed in the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court held against Kentucky. One of the ironies of this case is that after the Appeals Board found against Kentucky the U. S. Secretary of Education reduced their penalty by over 50 percent.

QUESTION: A. Would the Secretary have reduced the amount of the audit exception if they were absolutely guilty of supplantation?

B. Would the State of Kentucky knowingly approve a program that was illegal?

2. The Inspector General's office conducted a Title I audit of an LEA in a Northeastern state. After spending six months in the LEA, and finding no audit exceptions, they decided to expand the scope of the audit to include bilingual programs. In reviewing the bilingual programs, they charged the LEA with using Title I funds to supplant local funds to meet an agreement reached with the Office of Civil Rights. The auditors in this case had done such a poor job in reviewing the program that the Education Appeals Board found in favor of the LEA.

QUESTION: Should the Inspector General's office, in doing a fiscal and compliance audit, have an educator on the audit team?

I cite these examples of audits because LEAs are now more concerned about audit exceptions than developing programming that reflects the best practices in research.

Dr.Cooper's paper cites the benefits of reduced class size and also speaks to teacher competence. If reduced class size will significantly raise achievement levels, the law and regulations must give LEAs the opportunity to implement models that are legal and audit free.

If well-trained teachers are a key to the success of this model, the law and regulations should be crystal clear on the ability of LEAs to train teachers on the techniques and strategies that will bring about improvement. These should not be subject to the interpretation of SEA coordinators.

If necessary, a review procedure should be established in the U. S. Department of Education to assure that the model developed is "audit exception free." The review team should include a representative of the Inspector General's staff, the SEA coordinator, and staff from the U. S. Department of Education's compensatory education staff.

There should also be a provision in the law that permits LEAs to develop innovative approaches to solving problems. Programs of this type should be given a three year experimental status, have a tight evaluation design, a clear audit trail, and be reviewed at the end of each year for continuation approval.

When school districts are given the opportunity to develop creative program designs, we should see more effective Chapter 1 programming.

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